Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Ft. Belknap Reservation, MT
Unified Watershed Assessment

Watershed	Water Sampling (CWA 106, EPA)	Riparian Assessments (NRCS or BIA)	USGS data	Range Condition (BIA)	Nonpoint Source Assessment (CWA 319, EPA)	Fish Consumption Advisory (USFWS)	Fisheries Health (Tribe or USFWS)	Water Quality Standards (EPA)	TMDL Lists (EPA)	Overall Score
Middle Milk 10050004	1	2	4	2	4	4		4	4	1
White Bear 10050004150	1									1
10050004110										4
10050004160										4
People's 10050009	2	1	4	2	1	1	1	3	4	1
King Cr. 10050009010	*1*	*1*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*4*	*1*
10050009020	1				4	4		4	4	1
10050009030	1				4	4		4	4	1
Ft. Peck Reservoir 10040104	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	4	1	2
10040104020										4
Suction 10040104030										4
Beaver 10050014	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Big/Little Warm 10050014010	1									1
10050014020	1									1

1: Not meeting/immenent threat of not meeting water quality or other natural resource goals
2: Meeting goals
3: Pristine/sensitive aquatic system
4: Insufficient data to assess

Priority Watershed: King's Creek within the People's Cr. Watershed

Fort Belknap Indian Reservation
Unified Watershed Assessment

Past mining activities at the headwater of the Peoples Watershed (King Creek) is prioritized because heavy waste rock tailings discharging onto the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation have drastically changed the environmental/hydrological status of King Creek.

Historical mill mining in the Little Rocky Mountains began in the 1893 with gold being discovered in the August Mine area. The mill and thickening/filtering tailings were placed about 2500 feet upstream from the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation boundary. These stamp mill tailings were dumped into a series of settling ponds created by earthen log dams. In 1974 when the earthen logs busted and released the tailing onto the Fort Belknap Reservation's Peoples Creek Watershed it drastically changed the hydrological status of King Creek.

1. King Creek: A rapid flowing stream historically released 600 gpm onto the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation compared to less than 100 gpm. Past mining operations have diverted the source of King Creek and have used this water to spray a cyanide solution on heap-leach operation on the August Pit.

2. Because of tailings released from the Cumberland tailing dam in the spring of 1974 a down trend of environmentally proportions has effected King Creek. Loss of habitat, stream bank vegetation and bed substrate has diminished the benthic macroinvertebrate population. Benthic macroinvertebrate data from 1994 to 1997 have been scored, using the Rapid Bioassessment Protocol II; from kick net samples in the 2 mountain stream study sites, FB15 & FB15b, and compared to our reference site FB10.

   Reference site: FB10 North Fork of Little Peoples Creek. Available data collected from the Fort Belknap Environmental Protection Programs August 1994-August 1997 has shown a wide variant of benthic macroinvertebrate that are sensitive, intermediate and tolerant to pollinates.

   FB15 Headwater Near King Creek near Beaver Ponds. Data has shown a moderate to severe impact to benthic macroinvertebrate communities.

   FB15b Headwater King Creek 250 ft below FB15. Data has shown a moderate to severe impact to benthic macroinvertebrate communities.

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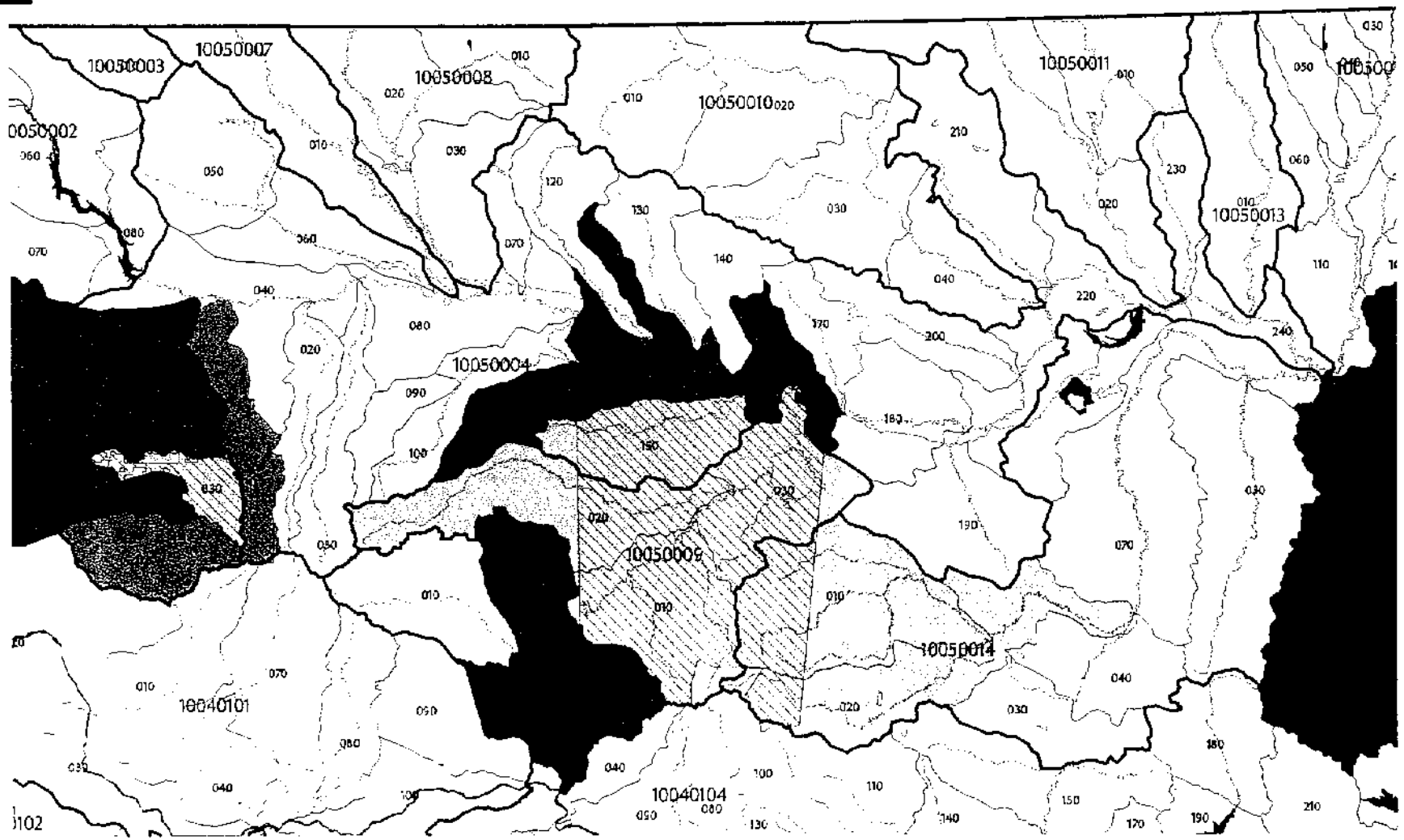

8-Digit Watershed Boundary

Major Hydrography

Category I Watersheds

Category II Watersheds

Category III Watersheds

Category IV Watersheds

Reservation Boundary

FORT BELKNAP ASSESSMENT CATEGORIES

MONTANA

Map Series No. 98MWGIS-510
NRCS-NRCS WATERSHED GIS

11/13/98

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE
FEDERAL BUILDING, 301 S. PARK, DRAWER 10096
HELENA, MONTANA 59626-0096

December 4, 1998

Ref: MO

TO: Unified Watershed Assessment Team

FROM: Barbara Burkland *Barbara Burkland*
Tribal Programs Coordinator, EPA Region 8 Montana Office

RE: Final Montana Tribal Unified Watershed Assessments

I am forwarding **final** UWAs for six of the seven reservations in Montana. Attached are UWAs for the Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Blackfeet, Ft. Peck, Rocky Boy's, and Ft. Belknap Reservations. While new information in the future will undoubtedly lead to updates of these UWAs in the future, the versions submitted here should be considered final. The Flathead Reservation has chosen a different format to present their information in and will submit their UWA separately, at a later date.

Each UWA consists of a map, a table, and a narrative discussion of problems in the priority watershed(s). The maps and tables reflect the fact that, for these reservations the assessments were done on an 11-digit HUC (hydrologic unit code) scale, rather than 8-digit. In some cases the entire reservation was classified by 11-digit HUCs while in other cases the 8-digit HUC identified as a priority by the tribe was broken down into 11-digit HUCs. This greater level of specificity yielded much better results than those presented in the draft UWAs where 8-digit HUCs were used.

As the key on the map indicates, each HUC has been assigned a classification of 1, 2, 3, or 4 as required by the UWA guidance. In some instances two classifications exist, even within an 8-digit HUC and where this occurs, a footnote has been used for clarification. This often occurs because many Montana reservations have high mountain headwaters and prairie, low-gradient streams within a single HUC. The maps were produced by Kathy Maynard, a USDA employee located within the Natural Resource Information Service located at the State Library.

The tables reflect the variety of information sources used to classify each HUC. The primary source of information was the Tribes themselves. All tribes in Montana, except Northern Cheyenne, are doing their own chemical and biological monitoring of surface water through EPA 106 grants. In addition, many of the tribes have performed habitat assessments of their riparian areas and surveyed their fisheries. In addition, information was provided by USGS, USDA,

NRCS, and BIA. USGS data is not well-reflected in the table as it will take some time to interpret due to the huge quantities of data that have been collected on some waterbodies. The USFWS has done extensive fish-shocking on the reservations in Montana, but I have been unable to reach them to obtain their data. In some cases, the tribes themselves provided information collected in conjunction with USFWS.

Public outreach to make these documents available to reservation residents has not occurred yet on any large scale. The tribes are waiting to see what the result of producing UWAs will be, to make such outreach more meaningful to the public.

All data used to determine the status of the HUCs is primary in nature and is available upon request.

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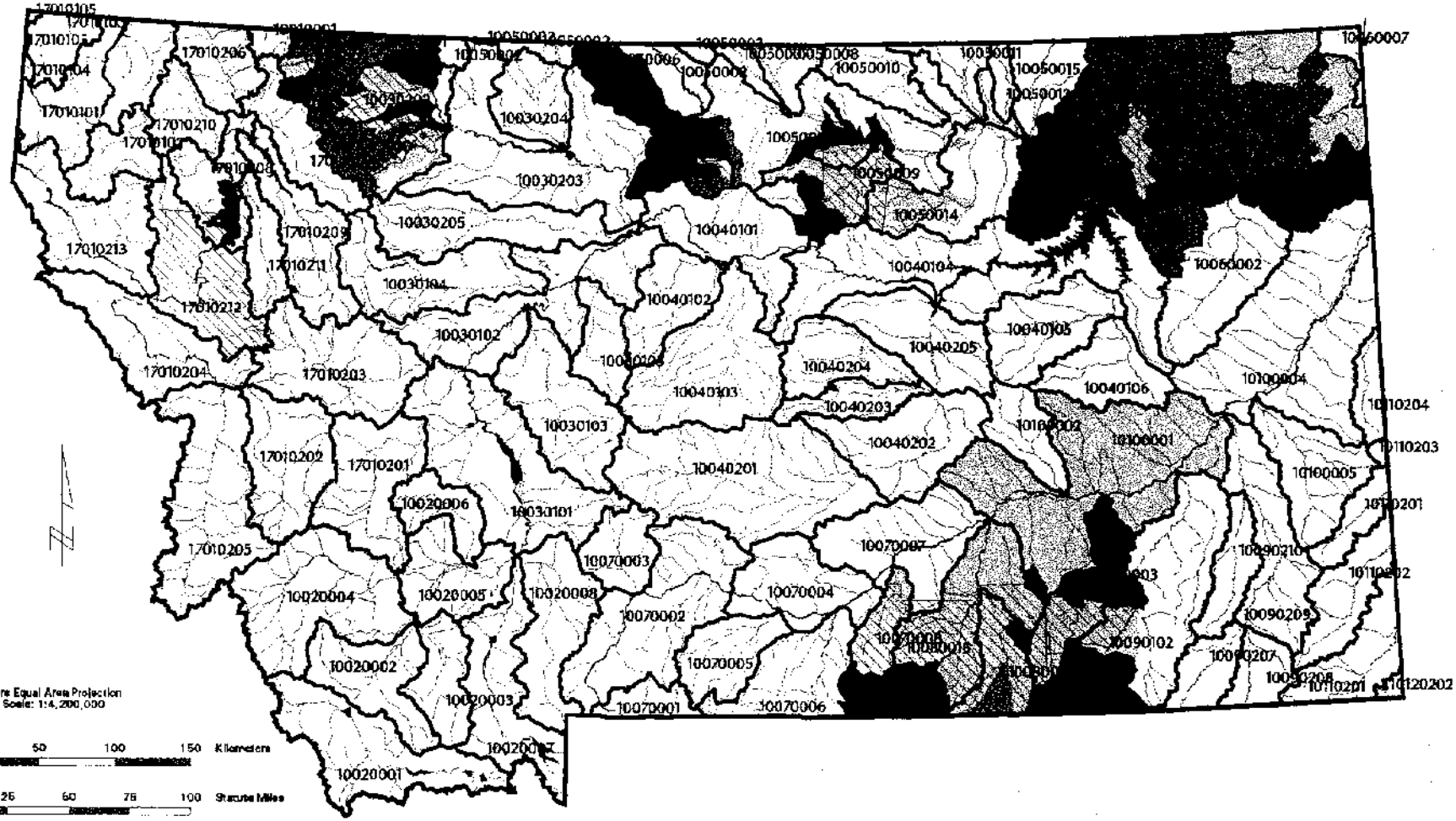

Albers Equal Area Projection
Map Scale: 1:4,200,000

0 50 100 150 Kilometers

0 25 50 75 100 Statute Miles

Category I Watersheds

Category II Watersheds

Category III Watersheds

Category IV Watersheds

Reservation Boundary

8-Digit Watershed Boundary

Major Hydrography

TRIBAL WATERSHEDS
Clean Water Action Plan

MONTANA

Map Series No. 98MWGIS-500
NRIS-NRCS WATERSHED GIS

11/13/98